

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
ACQUISITION TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ATAP)  
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

1. **REFERENCES:** SEE APPENDIX 1.

2. **APPLICABILITY:** This Army Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP) Policy and Procedures applies to all current civilian and Military Occupational Specialty 51C Noncommissioned Officer Army acquisition workforce members. All instructions in the ATAP policy and the annual announcement must be followed. Failure to comply will result in non-selection or removal from the program.

3. **PURPOSE:** This document establishes the policy and procedure for application and selection of the Army acquisition workforce members for the ATAP training opportunity and supersedes previous ATAP Policy and Procedures.

4. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. The Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DDACM).

(1) Provides oversight and management of the announcement and board process.

(2) Serves as final approval authority for Army acquisition workforce members selected to participate in the program.

(3) Serves as approval authority for the ATAP Relative Standing List (RSL).

b. U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC), Workforce Management Division (WMD). Coordinates with Organizational Acquisition Points of Contact and Acquisition Career Management Advocates (ACMAs) to ensure target audience is notified.

c. The ATAP Program Manager (PM).

(1) Develops, issues, and implements the ATAP Policy and Procedures.

(2) Manages the ATAP budget and processes all requests for tuition assistance.

(3) Reviews current student requests for additional funding and time extensions to complete the ATAP program.

(4) Markets the ATAP program to the Army acquisition workforce.

(5) Publishes the ATAP announcement on the USAASC website and ensures widest dissemination of information on the ATAP announcement, policy and procedures.

(6) Tracks the progress of each ATAP student ensuring that grade requirements in each class ("B" graduate level or "C" undergraduate level) are maintained and changes to curriculum or funding requirements are approved.

(7) Provides assistance with submission of ATAP application in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS).

(8) Reviews and determines eligibility of the ATAP applicants.

(9) Plans, organizes and conducts the ATAP selection process.

(10) Provides DDACM with the Review Board's RSL for approval.

(11) Notifies selectees/non-selectees of status once RSL is approved by the DDACM.

d. USAASC Resource Management Division (RMD).

(1) Completes fund-cite information and returns all documents to the ATAP PM for dissemination to ATAP participant.

(2) Returns the Standard Form 182 (SF182), Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training to the student within seven working days of receipt.

(3) Submits the SF182 and invoice to the Defense Finance and Accounting system for payment to appropriate vendors.

e. Organization/Current Supervisor.

(1) Ensures individual courses are included and approved on the Individual Development Plan (IDP) and is aware of employee's application for the ATAP.

(2) Approves Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) earned from completed classes by documenting on the employee's IDP at the completion of each class.

(3) Ensures the ATAP PM is notified immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies the employee for program participation.

(4) Ensures employees have met current position Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) certification requirements prior to participation in any Acquisition Education, Training and Experience (AETE) program.

(5) Notifies and provides the employee's servicing civilian personnel office a copy of the Continued Service Agreement (CSA) for entry into the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System and placement into the employee's official personnel management file.

(6) Informs the ATAP PM if an employee fails to complete the obligated period of service specified in the CSA.

(7) Notifies the new supervisor, if a change in supervisor occurs, that a service obligation agreement is in effect.

f. ATAP Participant:

(1) Provides a firm letter of acceptance or verification of enrollment from the enrolled college or university dated within one year of the ATAP application submission deadline date. Institutions of higher learning must have accreditation recognized by the United States Department of Education. Accreditation information may be found on <http://www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>. Students must apply and be fully accepted to the college or university prior to applying for the ATAP. (Note: Conditional, outdated letters of acceptance and verifications of enrollment will not be accepted.)

(2) Submits applications and supporting documentation as outlined in the ATAP announcement. Information can be found on the USAASC website at <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/acquisition-tuition-assistance-program/announcements/>. Individuals may only submit one application per announcement. MOS 51C NCOs in the Contracting Acquisition Career Field (ACF) may only apply for bachelor's degrees. Doctorate, associate's, and law degrees are not funded by the ATAP.

(3) Ensures the program of study meets the course requirement standards as stated in the ATAP program policy and procedures.

(4) Provides accurate Fiscal Year budget information by August 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. If funding is not fully executed, funding in subsequent fiscal years will be diminished. The participant is responsible for funds required beyond the funding limits outlined within this document.

(5) Exhausts entitlements under other federal programs, such as veterans' educational benefits or the Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System (ACTEDS) Program prior to utilizing tuition assistance under the ATAP.

(6) Maintains a grade of at least a "B" in graduate courses and a "C" in undergraduate courses. Failure to maintain these minimum grades in each course may result in removal from the program.

(7) Provides final course grades to the ATAP PM within 30 days of course completion. Failure to provide grade information within 30 days of course completion may result in loss of future funding or removal from the program with a one year restriction before reapplying. Instructions on how to submit grades are posted at <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/acquisition-tuition-assistance-program/documents/>. A reminder email of this requirement will be sent monthly.

Participants must provide a copy of all course extensions granted by the university or college to the ATAP PM.

(8) Reimburses the government for classes with an incomplete grade, withdrawal, or grade below a "B" in graduate courses and below a "C" in undergraduate courses. All reimbursements for the ATAP will be made by money order, certified or personal check and payable to the U.S. Treasury and mailed to: U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, Attention: ATAP Program Manager, 9900 Belvoir Road, Suite 101, Bldg 201, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5567.

(9) Ensures first-line supervisors are made aware of academic or other challenges that might interfere with success in the educational process.

(10) Selects courses from among approved programs of study. Provides appropriate substitutes to the ATAP PM prior to course commencement when planned courses are canceled, conflicts with other courses arise, or are unavailable. The appropriate substitutes must be added to the IDP and approved. Failure to provide appropriate substitutes, notify the ATAP PM or update IDP prior to the course commencement may result in the loss of future funding or removal from the program.

(11) Notifies the ATAP PM immediately when a change in employment no longer qualifies the participant for program participation or if acceptance into another training opportunity will interfere with the ATAP participation.

(12) Develops an IDP that lists all courses to be funded by the ATAP in coordination with his/her current supervisor. The IDP must be in an approved status and should include current and projected courses required to complete the program of study. ATAP must be selected on the IDP as the planned funding source for each course.

(13) Notifies the ATAP PM of any position change within the Army acquisition workforce and provides updated contact information.

(14) Ensures the beginning and ending dates for each course submitted on each SF182 match exactly the dates identified by the college/university. Adjusting start dates without notice may result in removal from the program. Ensures IDP is updated to reflect the same course title/number and dates as indicated on the submitted SF182.

(15) Ensures the approved SF182 is provided to the school for payment and to his/her organizational training point of contact for reporting/recording purposes.

(16) Ensures current position DAWIA certification requirements have been met prior to participation in the ATAP.

## 5. POLICY:

### a. ATAP Program.

(1) The ATAP is a part-time program that provides permanent civilian and 51C NCO (Contracting) members of the Army acquisition workforce an opportunity to keep their current acquisition position while completing a bachelor's degree, master's degree, three semester credit hours for calculus courses, or business hours required for Army Acquisition Corps membership during off-duty hours. The USAASC announces and conducts the ATAP selection process once each year.

(2) Participants are required to complete, at a minimum, one class per term. However, participants have the option of taking more than one course per term depending on their workload.

(3) Army acquisition workforce members may apply for consideration to obtain a second bachelor's or master's degree under the ATAP; however, the applicant's request may be given lower priority in the needs-based board selection process. The DDACM has final review and approval authority for these selections. The DDACM's decision to approve and fund a second bachelor's or master's degree will be based on funding constraints and the needs of the Army.

(4) Changes to the approved course of study must be approved by the ATAP PM prior to funding approval for the new course. The Certification & Core Plus Development Guides on Defense Acquisition University icatalog located at <http://icatalog.dau.mil/> will provide more information on educational and certification requirements within acquisition career fields.

### b. Learning Institutions.

(1) The ATAP funding will support educational pursuits through all schools and programs of study that are nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education. Accreditation information may be found at The Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs located at: <http://www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>.

(2) The ATAP will fund nontraditional modes of learning (courses via television, satellite, and on-line) when the courses are included in the program of study and are part of the school's alternate modes of training.

(3) The ATAP funding will be provided for College-Level Examination Program and Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (CLEP/DANTES) testing. A non-passing grade on any test will require reimbursement by the participant. CLEP/DANTES funding limits will directly relate to the funding limits of the ATAP program the participant is enrolled (undergraduate or graduate funding).

(4) Electives required as part of a degree must underpin the functions of the Army acquisition workforce. Electives that do not meet this requirement will not be funded by the ATAP. Courses must underpin the functions of the Army acquisition workforce unless the specific class is an actual degree requirement. The ATAP participants may be required to provide documentation of actual course requirements if the legitimacy of a course is questioned by USAASC. Direct any questions on electives to the ATAP PM.

(5) The ATAP will not fund prerequisite work. This includes any prerequisite course work required for admission into the ATAP-approved course of study, or prerequisite course work that is required to complete a degree program.

(6) Program participants must complete all courses with at least a grade of "B" in each graduate course and at least a "C" in each undergraduate course. Withdrawal from an ATAP funded course requires the employee to reimburse the government for all costs incurred for that particular course if the course has passed the course drop deadline and costs have been incurred. If the program participant receives three grades below the standard, withdrawals or incompletes, the participant will automatically be removed from the program with a one year restriction before reapplying. The ATAP participant must notify the ATAP PM immediately upon completing their ATAP-approved program, or when ATAP funds are no longer required.

c. ATAP Participation.

(1) The ATAP participant is required to reimburse tuition expenses to the government if grade requirements are not met or withdrawal from a course occurs. Full repayment must be received within 30 days of notice. If full reimbursement is not received the student will be considered inactive in ATAP until full payment is received. The student will be eligible for reinstatement once full payment is received.

(2) Any ATAP participant not attending scheduled courses for a period of one term (without prior coordination with ATAP PM) may be removed from the ATAP and required to reapply after one year of removal. Attendance will be reviewed on a quarterly basis. Due to funding constraints, there is no guarantee that future funds will be available at the time of reapplication.

(3) Participants must submit an SF182 in AAPDS no earlier than 45 days prior to the course state date. The required fields of the SF182s are highlighted within the automated form in AAPDS. The SF182s do not require the signature of the individual's supervisor and/or training officer. Approved SF182s will have the digital signatures of the ATAP PM and the USAASC Resource Manager in the appropriate sections on the document. Any SF182 submitted after the course start date will be returned. It will then be the individual's responsibility or the individual's organization to provide funding.

d. Funding.

(1) Funding for the ATAP will be centrally managed for Army acquisition workforce participants. As resources permit, educational related expenses outlined below would be funded prior to class attendance. The ATAP funds will not be provided as reimbursement for funds expended by the student or another organization. The DDACM can reduce/increase the funding limits at his discretion.

(2) Funding for a master's degree will not exceed \$2,050.00 per course and \$10,250.00 per FY. Business related semester/quarter hours at the master's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding required above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participants and/or their organization. The yearly funding limitation of \$10,250.00 applies to all the ATAP participants regardless of the number of courses taken.

(3) Funding for a bachelor's degree will not exceed \$1,550.00 per course and \$7,750.00 per fiscal year. Business related semester/quarter hours at the bachelor's level will adhere to these funding limits. Funding above this limit is the responsibility of the ATAP participant and/or his organization. The yearly funding limitation of \$7,750.00 applies to all the ATAP participants, regardless of the number of courses taken.

(4) Laboratory and technology fees required for course completion will be considered as part of the cost of the course and count as part of the total yearly funding limits. Registration fees, parking costs, travel expenses, entrance exams, graduation fees, the cost of books and materials, and all other expenses will not be funded by the ATAP. These expenses are the responsibility of the ATAP participant.

(5) Changes to pre-approved funding limits must be coordinated through the ATAP PM prior to submission of the SF182.

(6) Participants may request additional funds or an extension to their ATAP funding without having to reapply to the ATAP. Participants should fill out the ATAP Funding Update Form located on the USAASC's website at <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/acquisition-tuition-assistance-program/documents/> and submit it to the ATAP PM. Funding requests are not guaranteed and are at the discretion of the ATAP PM. The ATAP Funding Update Form may only be used for one additional FY of funding. Participants will be notified in a timely manner if their request is approved or denied. Funding extensions only apply for the program for which a participant was originally accepted into the ATAP (i.e., students attending courses for a bachelor's degree may not request additional funding towards a master's degree). Funds provided in the current FY do not carry over to the next FY.

e. Continued Service Agreement (CSA).

(1) Army acquisition workforce members selected to participate in the ATAP must complete a CSA before assignment to the training. Employees will be denied training if he/she fails to sign a CSA before the training begins. Supervisors will ensure the employee is informed in advance of the obligation. A signed copy of the agreement must be maintained in the organization's case file. The period of CSA obligation begins at the completion of the program. The employee is in full pay status while participating in ATAP.

(2) The employee is agreeing to the terms and period of obligation and is required to sign the CSA prior to the start of training.

(3) Supervisors at all levels are charged to protect the Government's interests should an employee fail to successfully fulfill his/her signed training agreement by not completing the continued service obligation period. The supervisor, or a designated official, will review the status and circumstances of each unexpired agreement to decide whether to transfer, waive or require repayment of expenses incurred other than salary costs. Managers should contact the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) immediately if it appears that an obligated service agreement may not be fulfilled.

(4) The total number of classes required for obtaining a degree and/or certification listed below will be used to determine the service obligation period beginning the day after the end date of the last class taken:

**TOTAL NUMBER OF CLASSES REQUIRED TO OBTAIN DEGREE AND/OR CERTIFICATION**

Total number of courses: 1 to 8	Total number of courses: 9 to 16	Total number of courses: 17 to 24	Total number of courses: 25 to 32	Total number of courses: 32 to 40
Service Obligation required: 6 months	Service Obligation required: 12 months	Service Obligation required: 18 months	Service Obligation required: 24 months	Service Obligation required: 36 months

(5) An employee is required to continue in service for three times the amount of time the employee participated in the program if the employee voluntarily drops out of the program. Employees dropped from the program do not have to reimburse funds but need to continue service within the Federal Government. The determination on whether or not an employee is involuntarily removed from the program, (e.g. for performance related issues) to continue service will be decided on a case by case basis.

(6) Reimbursement is required upon departure from the Federal Government when the service obligation has not been fulfilled. Training costs include course tuition, books and materials, and lab and technology fees. Salary and benefits are not included in the cost of training. If the employee fails to complete the obligated service period, action can

be taken to recover training costs. USAASC has the option of recovering the cost of training by setoff against accrued pay, compensation, retirement credit, or other monies due the employee if the employee fails to serve in the Federal Government for the agreed amount of time.

f. Consequences for Academic Failures and No-Shows.

(1) Army acquisition workforce members who academically fail a resident Defense Acquisition University (DAU) course required for their acquisition certification will not be eligible to participate in the ATAP. These Army acquisition workforce members will remain ineligible for ATAP until they successfully meet their certification requirements.

(2) The program restrictions listed in the above paragraph will also apply to any Army acquisition workforce members who are enrolled in any resident DAU course (regardless if the course is required for certification or not) and fail to show up for the class. The Army Director Acquisition Career Management office and the DAU consider these students "no-shows". This status can negatively impact the Army's future seat allocations for these courses. "No-show" Army acquisition workforce members will remain ineligible to apply for ATAP for a period of one year starting on the last day of the scheduled resident course for which they failed to appear.

**6. PROCEDURES:**

a. Application:

(1) The ATAP application is an automated process. To access AAPDS, please login to the Career Acquisition Management Portal at the link indicated below: <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp>. Once you log in, click Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPPMIS). Once in CAPPMIS, click the "AAPDS" tab, then select "Apply" link and select the ATAP program.

(2) Applicants must complete and submit an application for the specific education opportunity being pursued (i.e. business hours required for certification, AAC membership, or calculus credit; bachelor's degree or master's degree) through AAPDS no later than the closing date indicated in the ATAP announcement.

(3) Before completing the ATAP application, the applicant must document all planned courses on the IDP for all FYs ATAP funding is requested. Courses must be listed in the Education Plan section of the IDP, listed as "planned", and have ATAP selected as the planned funding source. The applicant must submit the completed IDP for supervisory approval and the supervisor must electronically approve the IDP.

(4) Applicants must check the small boxes next to the ACRB link and the supervisor's verification link within the application verifying their ACRB and their current supervisor's information are correct.

(5) Applicant must upload in AAPDS a signed and dated CSA.

b. ATAP Selection Board Process:

(1) The ATAP program is a needs-based selection process. Applicants will be rated by the Final Review Board based on preselected criteria. All individuals who apply for consideration for ATAP will receive fair and equitable evaluation under the announcement and board process.

(2) The ATAP PM receives and reviews all submitted applications for completeness and eligibility. The ATAP PM then forwards eligible application to the Final Review Board for review and selection recommendations.

(3) The Final Review Board reviews, ranks and compiles an RSL of eligible applicants and provides to the ATAP PM.

(4) The ATAP PM compiles application statistics and provides the RSL from the Final Review Board to the DDACM for final decision.

(5) The DDACM approves applicants for acceptance into the ATAP based on the availability of funds.

(6) The ATAP PM notifies applicants of the final results and provides the USAASC WMD with a list of approved applicants upon approval of the RSL by the DDACM.

(7) Army acquisition workforce members who apply with sufficient lead-time before the closing date of the announcement will be notified if their application is not complete. Applicants will then have the opportunity to resubmit the completed application no later than the closing date of the announcement.

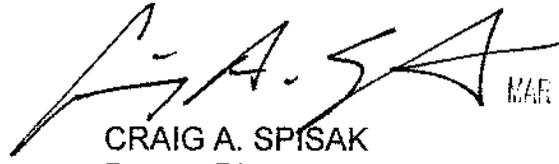
c. ATAP Acceptance.

(1) Selectees must notify their supervisor of their selection and acknowledge receipt of acceptance via email or phone no later than 14 business days from notification or risk having to reapply during the next open announcement.

(2) It is the participant's responsibility to fully familiarize themselves with all ATAP procedures (i.e. submitting grades, SF182s, etc.) on the ATAP website located at <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/acquisition-tuition-assistance-program/>.

7. **LABOR RELATIONS:** Activities are reminded to meet all statutory labor relations obligations in the implementation of this policy.

8. **EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION:** This policy and procedures are effective immediately and will remain in effect until superseded.

 MAR - 5 2013  
CRAIG A. SPISAK  
Deputy Director  
Acquisition Career Management

## APPENDIX 1

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1. Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 87, Defense Acquisition Workforce, Section 1701-1764, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act of 1990, as amended (DAWIA II) - [http://www.library.dau.mil/DAWIAPL108\\_136.pdf](http://www.library.dau.mil/DAWIAPL108_136.pdf).
2. Department of the Army, "Acquisition Career Field Certification Policy and Procedures," June 1, 2010 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
3. Department of the Army, "Continuous Learning Policy and Implementation Guidelines," April 11, 2011 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
4. Memorandum, "Consequences for Academic Failures and No-Shows in Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Resident Courses," March 30, 2012 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
5. Memorandum, "Enforcement of Mandatory Acquisition Certification Requirements," August 18, 2010 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
6. Memorandum, "Director Acquisition Career Management Guidance – Enforcement of DAWIA Certification Compliance Policy Memorandum #8," January 30, 2012 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.